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July 1, 2011

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: *Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90, A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket No. 09-51, High-Cost Universal Service Support, WC Docket No. 05-337*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The West Virginia Community Development Hub is a statewide non-profit organization with the mission of engaging communities and providers in an intentional, aligned and continuous system of community development.

The Hub does this by connecting communities with the network of resource and technical assistance providers they need to succeed; connecting those resource and technical assistance providers with one another in an effort to align those services to reduce redundancies and identify gaps; and connecting communities with one another to share best practices and reinforce one another's community development efforts. We envision West Virginia communities that are engaged in purposeful, self-directed development respectful of local culture and values. We are focused on connecting communities to a network of resources and opportunities so that each can accomplish its vision for the future.

The Hub works with communities and non-profits across West Virginia to help them build their capacity. Our initiatives include enhancing community sustainability, building local food systems, and creating a statewide non-profit association.

We use free conferencing services to help achieve our mission. This service has helped us cut our operating costs while still building a community of nonprofits who are striving to build a stronger West Virginia. Free conferencing services also enable us to entice more non-profits to engage. They are more willing to participate in a conference call if they know they won't have to pay the organizer fee that many of the larger carriers charge. The cost savings has helped us operate on a day-to-day basis and build a stronger community of non-profits. Without free conferencing services, our ability to achieve our mission would be severely undermined.

I recently learned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is considering changing rules, which would eliminate free conferencing services. This will cause a ripple effect among non-profits in West Virginia. The additional cost of communicating via conference calls will decrease how they converse and what non-profits will be able to accomplish with higher operating expenses.

As you move forward in your rulemaking process, I hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,



Kent Spellman
Executive Director
West Virginia Community Development Hub

cc: Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn